



To Be or Not to Be a CALS Ambassador

What is the CALS Ambassador Program?

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs) Ambassador Program works primarily with prospective students, alumni, industry leaders, and CALs faculty and students. The program focuses on getting future students to come to the University of Idaho, specifically the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. At the same time ambassadors represent the agricultural industry to current students as well as the general public.

What does the Ambassador Program offer?

Training – the program consists of two team building retreats and weekly classes. The classes focus on building leadership, communication, and networking skills as well as public speaking abilities.

Networking – being an ambassador you will meet hundreds and possibly thousands of people all over the Western United States.



What kinds of things do you do?

As an ambassador representing CALS you will be participating in the organization and implementation of on campus events including, Ag Days, Vandal Friday, and Annual Wine and Cheese Tasting fundraiser. Not only that but ambassadors travel all over the Western United States recruiting future students at state FFA and FCCLA conventions, science symposiums, and most importantly high school classrooms.

How has it helped your college experience?

“Being an ambassador has made me proud to be a Vandal. I have learned so much about the University of Idaho and all it

has to offer me as an individual. Not only that but I have made lifelong friends, met thousands of new people, and have been presented with opportunities, I never even thought possible.”

“The ambassador program has helped my college experience in a couple of ways. It has made me get out of my comfort zone and be a better leader acting as a face for our college. It has also helped me become more comfortable and familiar with the professors and staff in our college, which I would not have otherwise really been exposed to. I feel as though the ambassador group has taken me in and refined many of the skills I already possessed. I now feel as though I have become part of an elite group of leaders and am well prepared for my future.”

“Ambassadors helped me broaden my circle of friends and make memories that I normally wouldn’t have. I appreciated the opportunities that came with Ambassadors, going to Ag Shows, public speaking experience, and interaction with faculty and staff outside of my department.”

“The program helped me more with my public speaking and also presentation skills. The skills that I learned and fine tuned from the program are a huge aspect of what I do every day in my current job position. Also, I realized too that I loved working with students and education so I was able to make the decision not to attend vet school but to orient my focus on Extension and Agricultural Education.

Professional Development:

The best thing about the ambassador program is amount of public speaking opportunities that the students are presented with, most of which are outside of the university. This has encouraged them to be



more comfortable speaking fluently/naturally in front of audiences and above all improved improvisation skills.

A current ambassador states what they have discovered: “The ambassador program has benefited my professional development in many ways. It has made me a more confident speaker and presenter, which has helped lead me to be more confident presenting in front of peers and faculty and staff. This feeling of confidence that I have gained can be carried with me throughout my career and will make me a more valuable employee to my employer as I will be able to better communicate with people in the industry. Also, the ambassador program has allowed me to refine my leadership skills, which too will come in handy in my future career. Overall, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Ambassador program has helped make me a more prepared individual for a future in the agriculture industry. I feel that I will take a lot of good things away from this program.”

Words of wisdom for potential ambassadors:

“I would tell them that it is an experience of a lifetime. It really helps you get involved in the college community in many different ways. Not only does it provide you with many new opportunities and experiences for clubs and activities but it helps you make lifetime friends while developing important skills and building your resume.”

“Being an Ambassador will challenge you. You will be challenged with your public speaking abilities, your ability to talk to people from all over the Northwest, your ability to relate to students in high school who want nothing to do with the University of Idaho or CALS, and your ability to



overcome all of that even when you feel like beating your head against a wall. At the same time, being an Ambassador will potentially be the best experience of your college career. No matter what you do or

where you go, you will be able to draw on the experience you gained in this program. You never stop being a CALS Ambassador.”

“I would encourage a potential ambassador to join the program if they are looking for the chance to become involved with their college and have the chance to gain leadership experience. The program helped me to build experience in organization, leadership, and creativity. I had a

great time being a CALS ambassador and look back on my involvement with the organization as an extremely positive experience.”

“I would tell a prospective student that CALS Ambassadors is a great way to gain confidence, meet friends (not just acquaintances), give back to your school, develop better relationships with teachers and CALS office staff (all great reference-letter-writers!), get some elective credit, and have fun traveling to other states and parts of Idaho.”

What are the responsibilities of an ambassador?

As an ambassador you will have the core responsibilities represented below.

Fall Semester:

- Participate at the fall retreat
- Attend weekly classes
- Present to 6 high school classes
- Help with Ag Days

Spring Semester:

- Attend semi-weekly classes
- Present to 3 high school classes
- Help with Vandal Friday, Wine & Cheese Tasting

Core responsibilities shown full list at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/cals/people/ambassadors/becomeanambassador>

